

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 7 have been amended to clarify the claimed invention. Support for the amendments is presented in Fig. 4, for example. No new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendment and reconsideration of the present application in view of the amendments and following remarks.

Claims Rejection – 35 USC §112

Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 USC §112 as being indefinite. A recitation “recovery percentage in a folding test is conducted on the formed mat 70% or more” has been found to be unclear. It has been amended to “a recovery percentage folding test conducted on the formed mat is 70% or more,” to clarify the claimed invention. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejection – 35 USC §102/103

Claims 1-5 and 7-12 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(a), or 35 USC §102(e) as anticipated by or in the alternative, under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over Akuzawa.

Claims 1 and 7 have been amended to include a new limitation “the formed mat is elastic as a whole” to further define the claimed invention. The Examiner asserts that rigidity is not necessarily required in the base material of Akuzawa. However, all of the base material disclosed in Akuzawa, including a resin felt, a woodstock and a corrugated board, are rigid materials. Although, Akazawa does not explicitly state that the base material is limited to rigid material, the disclosure suggests otherwise. Moreover, it is common knowledge for a person in the art that the resin felt is a rigid material. Thus, the present invention goes against the direction of what the cited reference suggested and it appears that the cited reference do not have overall elasticity to conform to the shape of a floor panel, which the present invention has. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejection – 35 USC §103

Claims 1-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Akuzawa in view of Masuda. Since neither Akuzawa nor Masuda teach “the formed mat is elastic as a

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whole”, the same argument as above is applicable in here. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the applicant’s amendments to the claims and the foregoing Remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns which might prevent the prompt allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersign at the telephone number appearing below.

No Disclaimers or Disavowals

Although the present communication may include alterations to the application or claims, or characterizations of claim scope or referenced art, the Applicants are not conceding in this application that previously pending claims are not patentable over the cited references. Rather, any alterations or characterizations are being made to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this application. The Applicants reserve the right to pursue at a later date any previously pending or other broader or narrower claims that capture any subject matter supported by the present disclosure, including subject matter found to be specifically disclaimed herein or by any prior prosecution. Accordingly, reviewers of this or any parent, child or related prosecution history shall not reasonably infer that the Applicants have made any disclaimers or disavowals of any subject matter supported by the present application.

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Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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